

## Message Text

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14

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 L-03 EUR-12 EB-07 DHA-02 CIAE-00

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/106 W

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O R 032255Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0656

INFO USUN NEW YORK 449

USMISSION GENEVA

SECDEF

JCS

USCINCSO

UNCLAS GUATEMALA 1840

AID/AIDAC/PHA/FDRC

E.O. 11652 NA

TAGS: SWEL, GT

SUBJECT: SISTER CITIES

1. AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY, NATIONAL EMERGENCY COMMITTEE HAS ADOPTED PROCEDURE WHEREBY PVO'S, RELIGIOUS GROUPS, COUNTRIES, CITIES, ETC. WOULD CHANNEL RECONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE TO SPECIFIC TOWNS UNDER FORMAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED WITH THE COMMITTEE. AT LAST COUNT, THE INTEREST OF AT LEAST 25 SUCH GROUPS IN ASSISTING SPECIFIC TOWNS HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED ALTHOUGH AGREEMENTS HAD NOT BEEN SIGNED IN ALL CASES.

2. TOWNS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO ITALY, SPAIN, NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, AND CANADA AND LOCAL FAMILIES AND GROUPS. PHILADELPHIA, PA. AND LOS ANGELES HAVE EACH BEEN ASSIGNED ONE. WINGS IN MERCY (CALIF.) AND L.O.V.E. (CALIF) EACH HAVE TOWNS ALSO.

3. THE AGREEMENTS WHICH ARE BEING SIGNED STATE NOTHING MORE THAN THAT THE DONOR WILL PROVIDE ASSISTANCE IN  
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ACCORDANCE WITH A DOCUMENT SUBMITTED BY THE DONOR TO THE

COMMITTEE, AND THAT THE COMMITTEE WILL ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN DUTY-FREE ENTRY OF ITEMS BROUGHT IN BY THE DONOR FOR ITS PROGRAM.

4. THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN VISITED BY A NUMBER OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS SEEKING ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING APPOINTMENTS, DATA ON INJURIES, DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS, AND GENERAL ADVICE ON HOW TO PROCEED. WE HAVE ENDEAVORED TO ASSIST, AND WHERE INDICATED, HAVE ATTEMPTED TO STEER GROUPS TO THE

LARGER PVO'S (CARE, CRS, OXFAM) WHICH HAVE STRONG LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

5. IN VARIOUS MEETINGS WITH THE LARGER PVO'S CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED THAT EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE WILL NOT BE FORTHCOMING FROM MANY GROUPS WHO HAVE ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR TOWNS. SINCE WE DO NOT HAVE COPIES OF SUBMISSIONS MADE TO THE COMMITTEE, IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT EACH GROUP IS PROPOSING TO DO. MOST APPEAR TO BE INTERESTED IN HOUSING, BUT THE COMPLETE LACK OF LOCAL PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES ON THE PART OF MANY GROUPS RAISES SERIOUS DOUBTS AS TO HOW THESE INTENTIONS CAN BE TRANSLATED INTO COMPLETED HOUSES. IN SOME INSTANCES CARE HAS AGREED TO WORK WITH SUCH GROUPS TO ENSURE PROPER UTILIZATION OF DONATED MATERIALS. IN OTHER, THE GROUPS HAVE CHOSEN TO GO IT ALONE, EVEN REFUSING TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE EMBASSY. THE PROBLEM ESSENTIALLY IS HOW TO TRANSLATE GOOD INTENTIONS TO LOCAL REALITY WHERE THE LINK IS MISSING IN MANY INSTANCES. THERE IS ALSO THE NEED TO ADOPT COMMON OPERATING CRITERIA TO AVOID SUCH CASES AS FREE HOUSING MATERIALS IN ONE TOWN WHILE IN ANOTHER, PEOPLE ARE HAVING TO PAY. THIS PROBLEM HAS BEEN ADDRESSED SOMEWHAT IN PVO MEETINGS, BUT IT WILL ONLY BE RESOLVED WHEN THE GOG ANNOUNCES THE OPERATING CRITERIA FOR ITS HOUSING PROGRAM.

6. GIVEN THE MAGNITUDE OF RECONSTRUCTION NEEDS, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ANY ONE GROUP WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE ALL REQUIREMENTS IN ASSIGNED AREAS. THIS HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED IN SOME INSTANCES WHERE MORE THAN ONE GROUP HAS BEEN GIVEN

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RESPONSIBILITY FOR A GIVEN TOWN. HOWEVER, THERE IS THE DANGER THAT RAISED EXPECTATIONS WILL NOT BE SATISFIED IN MANY AREAS WITH POSSIBLE ADVERSE REPERCUSSIONS FOR THE GROUPS.

7. WE BELIEVE THAT GROUPS OR CITIES CONTEMPLATING "ADOPTION" OF A TOWN WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO WORK THROUGH IN-COUNTRY GROUPS WHICH HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE, PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES

NECESSARY TO PROPERTY UTILIZE DONATED ASSISTANCE. THE  
DONOR SHOULD ALSO MAKE CLEAR THE EXTENT OF ITS PROPOSED  
ASSISTANCE, BOTH TO THE COMMITTEE AND LOCAL TOWN  
AUTHORITIES. WE REEOMMEND ALSO THAT POTENTIAL DONORS  
ATTEMPT TO COORDINATE WITH OTHER GROUPS ALREADY IN-COUNTRY  
WHO MIGHT BE IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE COMPLEMENTARY  
ASSISTANCE. THE MISSION CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE IN THIS  
AREA.

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